THE PORT FOLIO,

(NEW SERIES)

BY OLIVER OLDSCHOOL, ESQ.

Various, that the mind of desultory man, studious of change and pleased with novelty, may be indulged—Cowp.

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ORIGINAL PAPERS.

MISCELLANY.

For The Port Folio.

A TREATISE ON ORIENTAL POETRY.

(*Continued from page* 54.)

IN the class of the Love odes of the Arabs, we ought to place the descriptions of feasts and pleasures, subjects upon which their poets often exercise themselves. The following is an example:

"In the laughing season, when the young Roebuck bounds upon the hills, and the sweet breath of the fresh gale announces the reign of the rose, the rivulets murmur agreeably, and the branches bow themselves to adore him, who has reclothed them with their green robes. Then we assemble in a garden beauties capable of inflaming the Universe with love. The liberal clouds cover the plains with their liquid pearls and transparent chrystals, and spread their precious drops upon the fields decked with vegetable rubies. The shining teeth of these beautiful maidens sparkle like jasper. Their eyes are clear as the pure silver, and are never obscured by sleep. The odoriferous branches enrich us with their treasures. The birds perched in groves of flowers delight us by their songs, and the air is embalmed with Musk. Oh! charming Paradise! in which my beloved shines like the full moon! Oh! what pleasures! what enchantment! It is here where eternity itself resides, at the height of felicity. The soft sound of kisses, voluptuous cooings, the tender sigh of Lovers, in this place alone strikes our ravished ears: all the united charms of Nature are the only objects which present themselves to our eyes, and the vivifying cup reanimates our senses oppressed with pleasure. Every thing enchants, every thing pleases around us. If the solitary Dervise could see this garden, he would immediately quit his retreat, he would without remorse break his former vows. Rise, my companion, fill the wine, sorrow ought not in this place to seize upon our hearts, a bumper of this divine liquor ought to cleanse them from all pain. Oh! how much the wine, the verdure of these fields, these beautiful maidens have of sweetness. Do not obey the Censor, he is full of deception and carries the publick enemy in his breast. May all deceit be banished from this place."

The Arabs also have a species of short odes, which much resemble the Persian odes; they often consist of four lines like the European Sonnets, and it is probable that this kind of versification was brought from the East into Spain, and thence pass-

ed into Provence and Italy. That which we now give is found in the original of the Arabian Tales of the thousand and one nights, and it is replete with those comparisons and images, which ornament with so much beauty the canticles of Solomon.

"By the arched bows which guard her eyes, and by her eyes which dart enchanting arrows with their glances;
By her delicate form, and by the cutting cimeter of her looks; by the shining majesty of her deportment, and the dark shade of her hair;
By her languishing eyes, which charm sleep, and give laws to the Empire of Love;
By the ringlets of her black hair, which like Scorpions lanch into the heart, the arrows of despair;
By the Roses and Lillies which bloom upon her cheeks, by the lively carnation of her smiling lips, and her teeth of dazzling pearls;
By the odour of her musky hair, and by the streams of wine and honey which run from her lips when she speaks;
By her neck like that of a Roebuck, by her stature equal to the Cypress, by her bosom swelled and rounded like a pomegranate;
By the graces which accompany her steps, and by the lightness of her form,
By the silky softness of her bosom, the sweetness of her lips and all the beauties with which she is ornamented:
By the affability of her manners, the truth of her words, the nobility of her birth, and the greatness of her Fortune;
By all these rare gifts, I swear, that the odour of Musk is less agreeable than that of her tresses, and that the breath of the Zephyrs, steals its perfume from her hair;
That the meridian Sun is less resplendent than her cheek, that the new moon is less beautiful than her forehead."

In some ancient collections made by Abu Teman Talebi, and by other authours, are many Love verses written occasionally, which are very neat and elegant, such as these four stanzas of Dhuel Remma upon an Antelope:

"Thou art recalled to my remembrance, Oh! Maïa, when the bounding Antelope outstrips my courser, and fixes upon me its large shining eyes.
An Antelope which inhabits the Sandy hills, whose skin is reddish, and who has a face like the Sun in its meridian.
It resembles Maia by its delicate form, by the beautiful roundness of its neck, by the lustre of its black eyes: but Maia shines with more splendour and with more charms;
When it shows its ornaments of Ivory, they seem to wave like the branches of the tree Ochar, when agitated by a torrent rolling in the valley."

We must now come to the Persians and the Turks, but there is little to say of these last, because the greater part of their odes are an imitation of the Persian, although it must be acknowledged that the Turks have verses of an original turn, and very elegant of which this is an example:

Kamer hemchere si di gabgabinung
Cheker hemchihre si di lablerinung,
Gulini sumbuling kilmish perichân
Asilmich ber kiline bing del u geân,
Lebing den lalung olmichdi yeri senk,
Dehaning den cheker kalmichde diltenk.

"The light of the Moon was equalled by the splendour of her countenance, and her lips were sweet as honey. The hyacinths of her tresses were scattered upon the Roses of her cheeks, and a thousand hearts were suspended to a single ringlet of her beautiful hair. The ruby, compared to her lips appeared only as a common stone, and her mouth took from sugar the prize of sweetness."

The Persians, above all, excel in their Love odes of which we have already given a specimen in the first section. It is surprising how much the odes of Hafiz resemble the fragments which we have, of the Lyrical Poets of Greece. We may assert with truth, that this poet has all the agreeableness and vivacity of Anacreon, with the softness and charms of Sappho. In general this kind of poems celebrate love and pleasure, and are interspersed with reflections upon the instability of Fortune, and the vanity of human wishes; they are called Gazels, and rarely contain less than five strophes each, or more than sixteen.

Although these Gazels or odes are worthy the curiosity of people of taste, it must be acknowledged that the ideas are often monotonous. The fertility of the language and the richness of the expressions, make this de-

fect disappear in the original, to which consequently it is impossible to render justice. After these considerations, and the assertion of those who pretend that poetry can never be well expressed by prose, the authour of this treatise had at first given the ornament of Rhyme to these Gazels, but having then been forced to depart sometimes from an absolutely literal translation, he at last judged that the inconvenience attached to this circumstance would be obviated by adding at the end of the treatise the same odes in verse that were to be here given in prose. If this repetition should appear strange, it ought by no means to be attributed to vanity, but to the desire of giving an idea of what we can make of the Oriental Poetry, and thus to open a career which others can pursue much better. As it was difficult to make a choice in the excellent collection of the odes of Hafiz, we have taken those at random, in imitation of the Orientals, who to decide as well on the least as on the most considerable occasions, fortuitously open a book and leaving all to chance, hold themselves to that which first strikes their sight. We have taken notice* of the confidence which these people have in this species of divination, when in the History of Nadir Shah† we have seen this prince, determine upon two famous seiges, by two verses of the same Hafiz of which we will join the entire ode to those we have just spoken of.‡

ODE I.

"My bosom is filled with Roses; I have wine in my head, my beloved yields to my desires. The monarch of the world is this day my slave.

Listen, do not bring flambeaux into our assembly, for the Moon of the cheeks of my Favourite is at its full in this banquet.

Do not burn perfumes in our banquetting chamber, for my soul finds no pleasure except in the embalmed odour of thy hair.

Do not speak of the savour of sugar and honey, for I desire only to taste the sweetness of thy lips.

In our apartments Wine is permitted, but, Oh! Cypress, decked with the most beautiful shades! without thee it is forbidden.

When thou art absent, and the weights of affliction oppress my heart, I always retire into the corner of my cell.

Why dost thou speak to me of reputation? hold it not in estimation; why dost thou tell me of my name? what is that to me?

My ear is constantly attentive to the melody of the Flute and the notes of the Harp; my eyes are always fixed upon thy ruby lips, and upon the circulating cup.

We love good Wine with obstinacy, we are amorous, our eyes are lascivious, but throughout the city, where is he who is not subject to the same faults?

Do not for these offences accuse us to the magistrate, he loves as well as we a bumper of this vivifying wine.

Do not seat thyself, Hafiz, without thy beloved at thy side, and wine in thy cup, for it is the season of the Rose and Jasmine, it is the feast of Spring.

ODE II.

"Shiraz, I salute thee! Oh city so deliciously situated! may Heaven preserve thee from ruin!

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* This treatise was subjoined to a history of Nadir Shah.

† Après que l'illustre guerrier se fut reposé des fatigues qui'l avoit soutenu pour se rendre maître d'Hamadan et de Kermanchahan, il conçut un vif désir de prendre Tauris. Rempli de ce dessein, il essaya d'en decouvrir le succès, en consultant les poëmes du divin Hafiz; et à l'ouverture du livre, le sort lui prèsenta une ode qui non seulement repondi t à la présente situation des affaires mais dont la dernière strophe (que voici) étoit frappante:

"O Hafiz! toi que Fars, toi qu'Irak admirèrent.
Quand de tes vers touchans les sons melodieux,
T'armèrent d'un pouvoir divin, victorieux,
Et ces fameux pays á la fois subjuguèrent;
Hate toi, viens cueillir les lauriers glorieux
Qu'à Bagdad, qu'à Tauris, les cieux te reservèrent."

Sur l'augure favorable de ces deux derniérs vers, les banniéres victorieuses furent déployées &c.

His. de Nad. Chah. Liv. ii, c. lix.

‡ This ode will be given in French Poetry at the end of the Treatise.

Oh Roenabad! may the same Heaven defend thy spring, of which the clear waters give us the long life of Kedher!
In the walks of Giaferabad, and Mosellay the balmy Zephyr breathes perfumes.
Haste, fly to Shiraz, implore the favour of its inhabitants, who are endowed with the perfection of Angels.
Who has ever boasted of the Sugar of Egypt, to whom the soft maidens of Shiraz have not caused their folly to be known.
Light Zephyrs, what news dost thou bring me from this tender, lovely and sweet beauty? In the name of Heaven, do not disturb my sleep, for I was happy in the enjoyment of her image.
If my beloved desires to shed thy blood, Oh! my heart, grant it to her as freely as the milk of her mother.
Since thou fearest so much, Oh! Hafiz, the hour of separation, why dost thou not return thanks to Heaven for the days of her presence."

ODE III.

"Boy, bring the cups, and fill them with wine, fill all the cups with a sparkling wine.
Bring wine, the remedy against love. Wine cures the maladies of young and old.
The wine and the cup are the Sun and the Moon; bring the moon to serve as a circle to the Sun.
Pour the liquid flames, pour the wine sparkling like fire.
If the Rose withers, say gayly bring wine the colour of the rose.
If the melody of the Nightingale no longer is heard, let us listen to the musick of the cups passing round.
Do not afflict thyself with the Alteration of Fortune, but be attentive to the harmony of the Lute.
I shall see the charming countenance of my beloved in my sleep: to hasten this moment give me another bumper of wine.
Although I be almost distracted, there is no other remedy for my frenzy, again pour me wine, that I may entirely lose the use of my senses.
Once more bring full cups to Hafiz, he is resolved to drink, whether it be to him permitted or forbidden."

ODE IV.

"This day is a day of joy and pleasure, it is the festival of the spring; we shall obtain what our hearts desire; fortune is subject to our commands.
Listen, Oh! moon, new spouse of the Heavens! do not show thy brilliant cheeks in the east, for today we see the full moon of the countenance of my beloved.
Why do we hear the Nightingale sigh at this hour of the morning! he prepares his melody at the approach of the spring.
Say to the censor, no more give advice to playful youth: who seats himself this day without his beloved and without wine?
See the Dervise, this day places himself in the corner of a tavern, who formerly had no dwelling except the Mosque.
Let it be loudly proclaimed, that today the eyes of Hafiz are fixed on the charms of his beloved and his lips upon his delicious cup."

ODE V.

"Tell me, Zephyr of the morning, where is the dwelling of my beloved? where is the resting place of that moon, who destroys her admirers?
The night is dark, and the valley of Aiman is before me; where is the moon of the hills; who will conduct me to the presence of my beloved?
All those who appear in the world soon lose their reason; they go about asking in the banquetting halls; where can we find a wise man?
May he who understands the concealed sense of my expressions, rejoice! we have many obscure sentences, but where is the man to whom we can confide our secrets?
I have a thousand affairs to settle with every ringlet of thy hair. Oh! where are we? and where is the useless censor.
I have lost my senses: this chair of musk has captivated my heart. Oh! where is she?
The wine, the dance, roses, all is prepared, but life is imperfect without my beloved; where is my beloved?
Hafiz passes his time in the garden at shelter from the winds of Autumn; but is there a rose without a thorn?

ODE VI.

"Oh how perfect is thy form! how lovely is thy discourse! thy attractions and sweetness enchant my soul.
Thy mind is as soft as the rose that is fresh, thy beauty is equal to that of the Cypress of the heavenly garden.
Thy spriteliness and wit are full of charms; thy cheeks are even and ecstatick; thy eyes and eyebrows are all that is most beautiful in the world; the graces animate thy form and majestick shape.
Each flower of the rosy garden receives new ornaments from thy charms; each

Zephyr takes the sweetness of its breath from thy hair as odoriferous as the Jasmine.

In the path of love we cannot avoid the torrent of anguish; nevertheless thy friendship has rendered my pain agreeable.

Sometimes before thy eyes I die, and sometimes in contemplating the splendour of thy deportment, my ills become delicious.

Although in the desert of absence, there is danger on all sides, the fearful and languishing Hafiz travels in it agreeably, when he occupies himself in forming wishes for thy return.

ODE VII.

" Come, I perceive, a soft Zephyr sporting on that countenance; all hearts are wounded by that cheek.

The descriptions which are given us, of the virgins of Paradise are explained by that cheek.

The musk of China receives its odour from those ringlets of hair; those tresses have stolen the sweetness of their perfume from that cheek.

The Pine is humbled with the grass, compared to that stature, the rose droops its head near that cheek.

The buds of the Jasmine envy that bosom; the flowers of the Amaranth are jealous of that cheek.

The fires of the Sun are accrued from the rays of that countenance: the moon is arrested in the firmament by that cheek.

The streams of life flow from the delightful accents of Hafiz, as his blood flows from his heart at the sight of that cheek.

ODE VIII.

" Ah, thy countenance, shining like the moon, is the fresh spring of beauty; that beautiful spot on thy cheek, that lovely dimple, as the centre of the circle of beauty.

In thy languishing eyes are concealed the enchantments of magick; among thy flowing ringlets is established the dwelling of beauty.

There is no moon which shines like thee in the firmament of Love; there grows no pine like thee in the garden of beauty.

The hours of love are rendered sweet by thy charms: thy attractions reanimate the season of beauty.

From the snares of thy hair, and from the allurement of the beautiful spot upon thy cheek no heart can save itself, they all become like the deceived bird, the prey of beauty.

Nature has chosen thee from all mankind, and like an attentive nurse she cherishes and caresses thee in the lap of beauty.

The Tulip buds are agreeable and fresh, because they are watered by the springs of life upon the banks of beauty.

Hafiz is smitten with thy charms, and declares that thy cheek is the only place where he finds the palace of beauty.

ODE IX.

" I love a beauty, who like the Rose is under the shade of a bower of hyacinths; her cheeks are as clear as a brook: her ruby lips respire the sweetest breath.

When she spreads upon her cheeks the net of her beautiful hair, she says to the Zephyr, keep our secret.

Her cheeks are even and lovely. Oh! Heavens, give her an eternal life, for her charms are eternal.

When I begin to be in love, I say, before I can find this pearl of my desires, perhaps I may find a sea without depth, or shall be at last overcome by waves.

Spill a drop of wine upon the earth; such is at present the condition of the greatest heroes; the power of Gemchid and Caikhosrev is no more than a vain fable.

Do not forbid me to contemplate thy stature so like the Cypress, I wish to seat myself at the head of thy fountain, for its waters run tranquilly.

If thou wishest to bind me in thy chains, bind me quickly; for delays beget misfortune, and he who loves suffers much.

Deliver me from the anxious cares of absence, if thou desirest Heaven to preserve thee from the looks of malignity.

When the rose smiles upon thee, Oh! Nightingale, do not be deceived; for we ought not to rely on the rose, notwithstanding it enclose the beauty of the universe.

In the name of Heaven, help my revenge, orderer of the Banquet, for my fair one drinks wine with the rest, and is only reserved with me.

What heart escapes her glances! she seats herself in ambush in a corner, and adapts her arrows to her bow.

What has happened to the court of my beloved, that the greatest Kings touch the threshold of it with their foreheads? How forgive my fortune? that amiable nymph whose beauty excites a tumult in the city, fills the heart of Hafiz with bitterness, although her mouth has so much sweetness.

ODE X.

" Oh sweet Zephyr, if it happen to thee, to pass by the dwelling of the object which my heart loves, may thy breath bring me the odour of her perfumed hair;

For with that breath my soul would be filled with voluptuousness, as receiving a message from that dear object.

But if thou art too weak to sustain such a weight, at least scatter upon my eyes the dust which thou gatherest from the threshold of her door.

I am confounded and remain immovably seated, in waiting its return. Ah! when will my eyes be charmed by the sight of that lovely countenance!

My heart formerly high as the Pine, now trembles like the willow, through the ardent passion, kindled by the graces of the form and shape of my beloved.

Although my beloved has little regard for me, I would give the whole world for a single look of her beautiful eyes.

How happy would it be for my heart if it was delivered from the shackles of the cares of life, since it is destined to be the vassal and slave of its beloved?"

The poet Hafiz, has produced many other works, in which we find the same beauty of images, and the same charm of expression as in his odes, which are about 600 in number. The Baron Revizki sent to the authour the two first of the ten odes we have just given; he had translated them into Latin with an elegance, worthy of a man of taste, whose most extensive acquaintance, as well with the Oriental as the European Literature gives him a distinguished rank among the learned of the age.

As the Eastern authours cannot but lose in the translation, perhaps the praises given them in this treatise will be found preposterous; but let those who think so, give themselves the trouble to translate literally the works of Horace, Anacreon and Sappho, and they will no longer be offended at what shall have appeared cold and dry in some stanzas of these Persian odes or songs. We may say on this head, with Miguel de Cervantes; he who pretends to judge of whatever poem it may be, in a literal translation, might as reasonably expect to find upon the reverse of Tapestry, the figures which it represents, in all their delicacy and splendour.

(*To be continued.*)

CRITICISM.

For The Port Folio.

An Elegy written in a country Church Yard—GRAY

But most the musick of the plaintive moon,
With lengthen'd note detains the list'ning ear;
As lost in thought Thou wanderest all alone. ANON.

We have already expressed our intention to bring before our readers some of the principal comments that have been offered upon that famous *Elegy*, which stands so completely alone in English poetry as to be sufficiently described by that name itself. Of a poem universally admired, it cannot but be pleasing to examine the more remarkable beauties; and it is useful to observe the imperfections. In one or two instances, it will even be found, that the meaning of the poet is a subject for misapprehension.

The criticks, whom we shall quote on this occasion; are Mason, Johnson, Scott, and Wakefield; with others, who have written anonymously.

1. Mr. Mason supplies us with some portion of the history of this poem.

" The most popular of all our authour's publications; it ran through eleven editions in a very short space of time; was finely translated into Latin by Messrs. Ansty and Roberts; and in the same year another, though I think inferiour version of it was published by Mr. Lloyd. He originally gave it only the simple title of *Stanzas, written in a Country Church-Yard*. I persuaded him first to call it an Elegy, because the subject authorized him so to do; and the alternate measure, in which it was written, seemed peculiarly fit for that species of composition: I imagined too, that so capital a poem, written in this measure, would, as it were, appropriate it in future to wri-

tings of this sort; and the number of imitations which have since been made of it (even to satiety) seem to prove that my notion was well founded. In the first manuscript copy of this exquisite poem, I find the conclusion different from that which he afterwards composed; and though his after-thought was unquestionably the best, yet there is a pathetick melancholy in the four rejected stanzas, which highly claims preservation. I shall therefore give them as a variation in their proper place."

II. Mr. Wakefield expresses himself with his accustomed warmth of feeling.

"We are at length come to that famous production of Mr. Gray's genius, in the commendation of which it is not possible for praise to be too liberal, and to transcend the expectation of the reader. I suppose, that the whole world cannot show such a finished and pathetick poem, Pope's *Eloisa* alone excepted; which is not more original, though more fortunate in such a curious combination of incidents as could hardly be expected to concur in one subject.

The reasons of that universal approbation with which this *Elegy* has been received may be learned from the comprehensive encomium of Dr. Johnson: "It abounds with images which find a mirror in every breast; and with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo."

III. The encomium of Dr. Johnson we shall quote at length. Adverse as this critick has shown himself to the reputation of every other production of Mr. Gray, he uses with respect to the *Elegy*, only the strongest language of approbation. "In the character of his *Elegy*, I rejoice to concur with the common reader; for by the common sense of readers, incorrupted with literary prejudices, after all the refinements of subtilty, and the dogmatism of learning, must be finally decided all claim of poetical honours. The *Churchyard* abounds with images, which find an echo in every mind, and with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo. The four stanzas, beginning *Yet even these bones*, are to me original: I have never seen the notions in any other place; yet he that reads them here, persuades himself that he has always felt them. Had Gray written often thus, it had been in vain to blame, and useless to praise him."

IV. 1, We shall proceed to single out the passages that are more peculiarly the subject of comment:

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Here Mr. Gray refers us to Dante, *Purgat*, l. 8.

——squilla di lontano
Che piao 'l giorno pianger, che si muore.

Mr. Wakefield cites Milton, *Il penseroso.*

Oft on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-water'd shore,
Swinging wild with sullen roar.

and adds—

"This is excellently descriptive; but there is a particular and superiour beauty in Mr. Gray's knell—the *funeral sound* of the *departed day*. Young says, somewhere in his *Night Thoughts*,

"It is the knell of my departed hours."

Curfew, in Milton's manner, *couvre-feu*—seems to be the proper orthography of the word.

"This initial stanza is very judiciously delivered with much simplicity of sentiment and expression."

2. Save, that, from yonder ivy-mantled tow'r,
The moping owl does to the moon complain,
Of such as wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

"If," says Mr. Wakefield, "one might venture to propose any alteration of such an admirable stanza, I

should prefer *silent bower;* as *secret* seems implied sufficiently in the *solitary* of the next verse."

We cannot admit the accuracy of this criticism. Surely, *secret* or *hidden* is something very distinct from *solitary*, and not necessarily to be implied in that expression. That the owl enjoys a *solitary reign* is one subject of observation, but that her *bower* or seat is *secret* is another, and one which naturally suggests itself to him who hears the cry, but cannot discover whence it proceeds. He might be tempted to believe, however, that the poet's idea was this, that the owl *complained to the moon* of *profanation* of her *consecrated* bower; using secret for consecrated. There appears to be an imitation of Shakspeare, in the Midsummer Night's Dream:

"Near to her close and *consecrated bower.*"

On the other hand, it is a more simple thought, that the owl complains only of *molestation* from such as wander near her *bower*, which bower cannot be better described than by the epithet *secret*, or *hidden;* nor worse than by that of *silent*, at the very instant in which the owl is *complaining*, and where, in point of fact, she is far from being *silent*, even when no wanderer is near.

3. Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf, in many a mould-'ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell forever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twitt'ring from its straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

If the first of these stanzas be one of the most faithful descriptive, the second is one of the most splendid in imagery, and harmonious in versification in the whole Elegy. The close connexion between language and painting can scarcely be more strongly illustrated than by the verse, *where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap:* this is, however, a technical defect; for it contains *eleven* syllables.

For what follows, we are indebted to Mr. Wakefield.

"———— slumbers light,
That fly the approach of morn."

"—— the time near the day called twilight; for at this time a breeze springs up. And so the poet:

"And river-breezes whisper morn's approach."

Which is from the Odyssey, v. 469.

"———— the noise
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan."

Their lowly bed,

Some readers, keeping in mind the narrow cell abovementioned, have mistaken *the lowly bed*, in this verse, for the grave; as, if I rightly recollect, Lloyd has done in his Latin translation of the *Elegy:* a most puerile and ridiculous blunder!

Jam neque sole rediens, Zephyrive susurrus odori,
Nec que stramineo sub lare garrit aves;
Nec galli strepitus, neque rauci murmura cornu
Excutient humili mascula membra toro.

"This, and the three preceding stanzas," continues Mr. Wakefield, "are parodied with so much humour in *an Evening Contemplation in a College*, that they cannot fail to divert the reader:

"Now shine the spires beneath the paly moon,
And through the cloister peace and silence reign,
Save where some fiddler scrapes a drowzy tune,
Or copious bowls inspire a jovial train."

"Save that, in yonder cobweb mantled room,
Where lies a student in profound repose,
Oppress'd with ale, wide echoes round the room
The droning musick of his vocal nose."

"Within those walls where, through the glimm'ring shade,
Appear the pamphlets in a mould'ring heap,
Each in his narrow bed till morning laid,
The peaceful fellows of the college sleep."

"The tinkling bell, proclaiming early pray'rs,
The noisy servants ratt'ling o'er their head,
The calls of business and domestick cares,
Ne'er rouse these sleepers from their downy bed."

"I am sorry to add that the parody is, in part, what the original is altogether, *truth* and *nature*."

The mistake of Mr. Lloyd, we are by no means disposed to denominate *a most* puerile and ridiculous blunder; but, rather, to impute to the imperfection of the original. It was extremely injudicious in Mr. Gray, after describing the *dead* as *asleep* in the grave, immediately to abandon the *metaphor*, and speak of *sleep* in its natural sense. Another unfortunate particular, greatly contributes to the ambiguity, is the use of the epithet *lowly*, instead of *humble*; for the mind more readily refers *lowly* to the *grave*, than to the *cottager's bed*.

THE DRAMA.

THEATRE, DRURY LANE.

A new *Melo Drama*, in three acts, entitled *Tekeli; or The Siege of Montgatz*, was produced last night.

The Scene is laid in Hungary.

Count Tekeli having been oppressed by the EMPEROUR, is driven into the Castle of Montgatz, whence he escapes to Turkey, in hopes of assistance from the Grand Seignior; he leaves the fortress in the care of Alexina, his wife, who withstands, for some months, all the attacks of the Imperialists; but at length her stores being nearly consumed, she is on the point of surrendering, when the piece opens, and Tekeli, attended by his friend Wolf, reach the forest near Montgatz; here they are found, fatigued and nearly worn out, by Isidoreand some peasants, who convey them to the mill of Keber, being disguised as peasants themselves; Conrad, the honest miller, receives them warmly, and promises them every comfort; a detachment of guards arriving, Tekeli discovers himself to the Miller at the moment a great reward is offered for his head, when Conrad, retaining his promise, conceals the Prince. The whole second Act consists in stratagems, contrived by him and Wolf, to get Tekeli into the Castle, which, at length, they succeed in, and he is carried over the Torze in a sack. Count Caraffa, the Austrian General, arriving at the Mill soon after, Conrad discloses the whole to him; is arrested, and carried off. The third Act discovers Alexina on the point of surrendering; her Council assembled; an Austrian officer informs her that Tekeli is their prisoner; she remains undismayed, and a few moments assures her she was right. Tekeli's name resounds through the Castle, he clasps her to his heart, and gives orders to make sallies on the enemy; his appearance reanimates the troops, and the piece ends with a grand engagement of the Armies, and the defeat of Caraffa and the Imperialists. This, and the simple loves of *Isidore* and *Christine*, the villainy of a peasant, who wishes to give up the Prince, and some incidents during his concealment in the Mill, form the plot of the piece.

This piece is a translation by Mr. Hooe, jun. and adapted by him to the English stage. The interest is supported with much ingenuity through the whole performance. The musick is pretty, and well adapted to the action. A very sweet air was charmingly sung, in the first act, by Mrs. Bland, and loudly *encored*. Miss Duncan, in the third act, sang an air, accompanying herself on the harp with great taste and execution, and was rapturously *encored*. The scenery is picturesque and beautiful; and the authour is much indebted to Mr. Wroughton, Mr. Elliston, Mr. Decamp, and Miss Duncan, for their great exertions in his favour. The dialogue abounds with loyal and noble sentiments. We never saw a piece receive more unbounded applause; it was announced for a se-

cond representation amidst repeated bravos; and, when it has received some compression, will have a long run. The house was extremely full, and contained much fashion. His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge, and Lord Henry Fitzgerald were present.

LAW INTELLIGENCE.

COURT OF KING'S BENCH, FEB. 13.

Sittings at Nisi Prius, at Westminster, before LORD ELLENBOROUGH, C. J.

DICKENS v. BURNAND.

Action of assumpsit, for stating that the defendant in consequence of a certain reward, agreed to repair a curricle, and put in a good sound pole. Breach, that he repaired the curricle so negligently, and put in so bad a pole that the pole broke, whereby one of the plaintiff's horses was injured and killed.

The plaintiff, captain Dickens, bought a curricle of the defendant, who is a coach-maker, and shortly after met with an accident, by which the pole was broken. He then went to the defendant, and said, as he had met such bad luck with it, he would dispose of the whole together. The defendant, however, told him not to be dissatisfied with his bargain, for he would put in a new pole, and that "there should be such a pole as he would warrant should be good timber, and it should not break again." He accordingly had orders to make one, and a fortnight afterwards sent it home. The plaintiff then set out on a journey to Ipswich races with a friend, who was driving him. They went at the rate of six miles an hour, and when they got to Rumford the gentleman who was driving pulled up, in order to take in a dog belonging to captain Dickens, which was running by the side of the curricle, when, on a sudden the pole broke near to the socket. Capt. Dickens leaped out, his friend remained in for a short time, trying to stop the horses, but was at length thrown between their legs, fell into the road, and the curricle going on, at length the leg of one of the horses caught in the wheel; the fetlock was thrown out of the socket, and the horse killed. The value of the horse was fifty guineas, the price of a new pole was two guineas. The accident happened on the first day the pole was used, and all the witnesses agreed that it was a very rare accident for a pole to break in fair driving. It appeared in proof of the plaintiff's negligence, that although the wood of the pole was of a very good quality, yet it was cut across the grain in the part where it was broke off, and the job was put in hand only on the Thursday before it was sent home on the Sunday. The wood was purchased by a piece master, employed by the defendant, on Thursday, and wrought up on that night, painted, fitted with leather, and finished on the Saturday.

Lord ELLENBOROUGH thought that the pole should stand an ordinary wear, the warranty was sufficiently proved, and that considering the particular manner in which the defendant's attention was drawn to the subject, he should have seen to the business himself, and not have left it to his journeyman. Although the wood might be well seasoned, yet in an article of such importance, he should have expected the coach-maker to have kept the wood by him to have been certain that it was so. Verdict for plaintiff—damages 54*l.* 12s.

For The Port Folio.

CLASSICAL LEARNING.

(*Continued from page* 58.)

Some have imagined that learning can flourish only in free states; and certainly the enjoyment of liberty and the consciousness of that weight which every citizen has in the publick scale, is favourable to that noble enthusiasm and dignity of sentiment that leads to the improvement of science: experience however, has shown that even under arbitrary monarchies, learning

may be cultivated to a considerable degree, especially when patronised by the prince or his courtiers. But sundry other circumstances, mostly unknown to us, are requisite for spreading a taste for knowledge, the want of which has occasioned its slow progress, even under visible circumstances of encouragement.

The invention of printing has contributed amazingly to the diffusion of knowledge, and rendered it much more general than it could have been in former ages. We can scarcely at this day conceive the labour with which the students of those times were obliged to transcribe the books they made use of, or the expense they were at in purchasing copies wrote by others. But as printing on the one hand has rendered knowledge more accessible and diffusive than formerly, it has on the other multiplied the number of books to an amazing degree, and by that means enlarged the labours of the student, so that the French philosopher had reason to complain, that it required more reading in modern times to make a wise man, than among the ancients would have served seven. But notwithstanding the facility with which printing multiplies the copies of books, the luxury of modern times has so enhanced their price, that a London edition of a new book, costs as dear as the expense of making a manuscript copy. The booksellers of Dublin have done much of late to diminish this grievance, and may we not hope that something of that kind may be done in America, if the liberal and mechanick arts be properly encouraged in this country?

The study of the classicks, by striking the fancy and awakening the active powers of the mind, was a great mean of reviving learning in Europe during the latter part of the fifteenth, and the sixteenth century, as a proof of which we find that the earliest authours of every country have been poets. And the same elevation of mind, and activity of imagination that are so requisite in poetry, contribute no less towards forming the philosophick character. The travels of the ancient Grecian sages, the danger to which they exposed themselves, the time they spent in their studies, and the eagerness with which they applied to them, are so many incontestible proofs of the high esteem they felt for knowledge, and the elevated notion they had formed of the philosophick character. To what heights might not men of such activity have soared, had they possessed the advantages which are so little valued by many in the present age, merely because they are common, and accessible to many.

The knowledge of human nature is what we ought chiefly to have in view in every branch of study, and this is much promoted by the study of classick authours. However various from sundry causes the theories of men have been, even with regard to their own nature, yet that nature itself remains always the same, and varies only in its appearances and modes of exhibition. The poets generally represent it in its purity, less stained with the disguise of art, and more free from the fetters of fashion, than it appears in our times. A celebrated critick has observed that if all the theories of the passions were extinct, the world would be at no loss, because the passions themselves still remain, and exhibit their true nature to an attentive observer, better than any laborious description of them that has been made hitherto. The same may be said of human nature in general. After all the theories, histories and speculations that have been made by learned men concerning it, we may obtain juster notions by studying nature itself, or as it is described in the writings of those authours, that have most early copied it, before its features have been so much altered by luxury and corruption.

The Epicurean philosopher imagined that the original state of man, the savage state, *cum prosepserunt*, &c. and that subsequent refinements arose from accident or necessity. It is surprising that sundry modern philosophers have fallen into the same conceit. Charron and Montaigne among the French, and Mr. Hobbs among the English, led the way to this delusion, which is now become fashionable by the authority of great names. Surely those men wished to degrade human nature, by attributing to it, without evidence, so base an origin. It is true that all civilized nations are descended, more immediately or remotely, from barbarians, and the example of modern Greece, Egypt and the Lesser Asia, evinces that it is possible for a civilized people to become in a great measure barbarous, when they become the prey of barbarous nations by conquest, but we have no sort of proof that the first men were barbarians. The sacred history, which alone describes, or approaches to the origin of the world, represents them as early instructed by their Creator, and society improved even during the life of the first man, with the most necessary arts.

Conceptions of human nature formed merely from imagination, are not only false and absurd, but dangerous in a like proportion. All these theories agree in debasing the human character to the level of the beasts of the field, and blasting the hopes of immortality and eternal happiness, which constitute the true dignity of man. Some moralists, says a wise French philosopher, lays down the duties of life, without determining whether the soul is im-

mortal or not, though this doubtless must vastly alter the case.

For this reason, ancient and descriptive poetry, which exhibits human nature as it is, without attempting to deduce the causes of its various phænomena, or to build a system of philosophy on an imperfect view of them, ought to be considered as proper and necessary antidotes to the poison of modern infidel philosophy now unhappily so much in vogue. The infidels have indeed stole from the Scriptures all that is rational in their systems concerning the perfections of the Deity, and the duties of men, which they fondly attribute to the discoveries of their reason, but they have painted human nature in a manner very different from that in which it is represented in the Scriptures, or ancient classick writings. A modern infidel, whether of the school of Voltaire, Rousseau or Hume, is as incapable of subscribing the creed of the classicks, as of equalling their genius and abilities. The classicks are too faithful to nature, and too near the simple and incorrupt state of mankind, to favour those degrading notions of our nature which modern infidels have prostituted their powers to support, for the service of Vice and Materialism.

In youth our general taste of things, and our prevailing habits of thinking, are ordinarily formed. But how dangerous is it for youth to form their notions of human nature from novels, or infidel philosophers? the first indeed, however extravagant, are not so much out of nature as the others; and how much safer is it for them to learn human nature from those who from the nature of their performances could have no intention to deceive, and whose works recommend themselves to every incorrupt taste, than from those who have endeavoured professedly to found their literary fame upon the ruins of Truth and Decency, and to eradicate every principle of piety under colour of removing prejudices? we need not wonder at the disorders of those men's lives, who have sacrificed every rational sentiment to the demon of fashion, and imagined that they did honour to human nature by imagining that mankind are only a sort of improved quadrupeds.

Low notions of human nature, inspire mean and vicious principles, and extinguishes every generous effort of the mind. Social virtue must appear only a dream to those who limit our existence to the present state, and extinguish all hopes of future blessedness. The stoicks offended by forming too high notions of human capacity, and imagining that we might do what we pleased with ourselves, but their errour was much more respectable and innocent, if we may so speak, than that of modern infidels, who bound all our hopes by the present scene, and check every noble effort of the human mind.

The powers of the mind are improved by exercise, and the student must come with peculiar disadvantage to the abstract studies of philosophy, if he has not previously exercised his faculties on some other subjects. And on what can he exercise them with so much propriety, as on those writings which contain the most accurate pictures of nature, the truest history of mankind, and the maxims of primitive wisdom and virtue? the moral state of the mind, and its intellectual faculties, influence each other to a great degree. Those opinions, which, from our habits and inclinations we would wish to be true, will appear to the mind as clothed with additional evidence. To this source many errours of the moderns ought justly to be traced. And on the other hand, the enlargement of our knowledge and intellectual powers, as well as the rectitude and accuracy of our intuitive faculties, must discover new reasons of our duty, new beauties in virtue, and set the horrours and evil consequences of vice in a stronger light.

In the beginning of the reformation of religion in Europe, an opinion prevailed among the Roman Catholick Divines, that the matters then in controversy ought to be decided by the authority of the fathers of the christian church. Whatever may be in this, it might be asserted with more propriety that the controversy betwixt infidel and christian philosophers ought to be determined by the decision of the classick authours, whom both profess to hold in equal admiration. It might be easy to collect such a number of testimonies, doctrines, and maxims from heathen authours, as would stagger an intelligent infidel, and oblige him either to renounce his admiration of the classick writers, or embrace those doctrines which he affects to condemn as contrary to reason. But it is not probable that many of this tribe, who are so eager to revive the immoralities of the most abandoned heathens, would be moved by the authority of the wisest of them, when they discovered that they gave countenance to the doctrines of the christian faith.

When we meet with just and pious sentiments in the writings of the classicks, when we observe the reverence which the wisest of them paid to the Supreme Being, and the dependence which they believed all things had on his will, we may be convinced that it is not the strength of their genius, or their regard to reason, that makes so many men infidels, but rather pride, love of singularity, and sensual habits, that prompts them to seek a religion suitable to

their character, and indulgent to their appetites, and to form a Deity as like as possible to themselves; the prejudice of habit, it is to be believed, has had more share in the formation of certain modern systems of philosophy than strength of argument or a regard to reason. The belief of a just and holy God, and of a future state of rewards and punishments must appear less agreeable and consequently less credible to those who have no rewards to expect, but many reasons to dread the just vengeance of the righteous Governour of the world, while virtuous minds easily discern the force of those arguments that not only convince their reason, but promote their peace, and encourage them to hope for an eternity of happiness which crowns their enjoyments in prosperity and dispels the glooms of adversity and death.

(*To be continued.*)

ECCENTRICK ADVERTISEMENTS.

The 23d *of August*, 1806,

Ever to be remembered, on account of the wonderful recovery of John R. Shaw, who was on that day blown up in a well.

About 9 o'clock, (as near as I can recollect) the blast went off, but it was a considerable time before the neighbours were apprised of my unhappy situation, and for the want of their assistance, I lay about an hour immerged in smoke, mud, and water, almost dead with the loss of blood, wounds, and broken bones. Both my arms were broken, my left in three places, as also my right leg broken, and my left hand mashed, (in such a manner as induced the Doctors to take off two of my fingers,) and about one hundred flesh wounds, which caused a general belief that I never should recover. But

The Lord has pitied me,
And shined upon my face,
That all the earth may see
The wonders of his grace.

At the same time, Mr. Thomas M. Barney, who was standing over the well, was knocked down by the force of the explosion, and lay some time insensible; but received no serious injury.

A messenger was sent off to Mr. Sanders, my employer in Lexington, who immediately despatched Doctors Fishback, Dudley and Warfield, who set my broken bones and dressed my wounds. After which I was safely conveyed to my own house, accompanied by a number of respectable citizens of Lexington, and its vicinity. On my arrival I was reexamined, and my skull found to be fractured about the size of a dollar, and a fresh operation was performed with all possible speed and sound judgment.—The faithfulness of my Surgeons, by day and night, will (I hope) prove an honour to all the Medical Society. The friendly visits, and generous contributions of the citizens, might be a pattern to all the world; and I hope those considerate gentlemen will be repaid an hundred fold, by the Great Rewarder of good actions.

JOHN R. SHAW.

In a few months I shall present to the publick, a narrative of 30 years of my life and travels—5 different times a soldier—3 times shipwrecked—12 months a prisoner of war—with the number of sieges and engagements in which I took part—4 times blown up, and my recovery—with a number of little anecdotes, which will cause the reader occasionally to laugh and cry.

JOHN R. SHAW.

For The Port Folio.

THE LAY PREACHER.

"Commune with your own heart, and in your chamber, and be still."

Having, in my last speculation, attempted to describe some of the delights of Study, in this paper, it is proposed to consider the true use of Retirement. Between them there should be a perpetual alliance: nay, they are not only neighbouring and friendly powers, but they are familiar connexions. Amiable, interesting, and lovely Sisters! if your worthy admirer be attracted

by the riches of one, he will quickly be delighted with the pensiveness of the other. Study will give him all her books, and Retirement conduct him to all her bowers. In no ramble, will he experience more delight than when he roves through the healthful wood, or saunters through the tranquil cloister, with Retirement on his right hand, and Study on his left. Though their guise is exceedingly modest, though their conversation has no resemblance to loquacity, though their best attire is from no other wardrobe than that of sweet Simplicity, still they will always gain more regard from the wiser, than all the pageants of the pompous, and all the plumage of the vain.

The Royal Psalmist, from whose divine odes, I have transcribed my text, was himself a memorable example of the utility of retirement, reflection, and self-communion. It will be remembered, that he was a warriour, a statesman, a man of business, and a man of the world. In these various characters, though he often acquitted himself excellently well, yet unfortunately, in some flagrant instances, we perceive how much he was tainted by the infection of the world. But when he shuts his eyes against the glare of Ambition, and the gaze of Beauty, when he ceases to touch the harp of Fascination, and forsakes the Cabinet and the Camp, then we recognize, at once, the scholar, the philosopher, and the poet. In the caves of Engedi, he is a mere soldier, in the palace of Saul, a servile musician, in the cave of Adullam, a skulking fugitive, and in the forest of Hareth, an unhappy exile. But when he tore himself away from the thraldom of care, the bustle of business, and the din of Jerusalem, when he wandered away by *the brook of the field*, or the *plains of the wilderness*, when he retired to his chamber, and communed with his heart, then he formed those noble associations, and composed those exquisite performances, which will transmit his name, with renown, to the remotest posterity.

My Lord Bacon, Sir Walter Raleigh, Erasmus, Grotius, Mr. Addison, and Mr. Locke, together with a great multitude of illustrious men, have been deeply involved in the cares of publick business, as well as engrossed by the meditations of the closet. But for the fairest portion of their glorious fame, how much are they indebted to the latter! While the chancery decrees of Sir Francis Bacon moulder away in the hands of some Master of the Rolls, the experiments of his study, and the *Essays* of his wit, like certain exquisite paintings, grow brighter by Time. While we peruse, with still renewing pleasure, Raleigh's History of the World, his unlucky politicks are scarcely regarded. Mr. Addison was Secretary of State, and Grotius an ambassadour; but who inquires for the despatches of the one, or is interested by the negociations of the other? The fame of Erasmus, constantly immersed in the turmoil of his times, and engrossed by cares, civil and ecclesiastick, would have perished with the names of those miserable monks, whom he has derided, or those imperious princes, whom he has courted. But by sometimes wisely withdrawing himself from the cabals of a court, and the polemicks of the Church, by meditating on horseback, and in his chamber, by avarice of time, by intenseness of application, and ardour of genius, he has filled *ten folios*, composed in

the purest Latinity, where an indolent reader can find nothing too prolix, and where a critical reader can discover nothing to reprehend. The foolish politicks of ADDISON are scarcely remembered, even by his faction. The character of LOCKE, as a man of business, is painted with no other pencils than those of ridicule, and the diplomacy of Grotius, and of Sir William Temple are *utterly contemned;* but their literary and philosophical works, the beauteous offspring of RETIREMENT and STUDY, WILL CONTINUE to charm,

'Till Time, like him of Gaza, in his wrath,
Plucking the pillars that support the world,
In Nature's ample ruins lies entombed,
And midnight, universal midnight! reigns.

Though in the text we are admonished to commune with ourselves, in our *chamber*, yet it would be a very partial and narrow interpretation, if it were concluded that we could not meditate anywhere else. The secrecy of a closet, and the stillness of midnight, are, unquestionably, propitious to the powers of reflection. But other places, and other seasons may be selected for that salutary discipline, which the Psalmist recommends. It is a vulgar errour to suppose, that retirement and contemplation are never to be found, except in a forest, or a desert, a cell, or a cloister. In the thronged mart, and in the blaze of day, he who has inured himself to habits of abstraction, may commune with himself, as though he was in his chamber. Proofs of this abound in many a page of the records of literature. Some of the fairest displays of self-knowledge, some of the finest results of meditation, some of the sweetest fruits of retirement owed their appearance not to the tranquillity of sylvan groves. In many a metropolis, resounding with the din of Commerce, and crowded with the throng of Nations, *Contemplation has had her fill.* Though a sublime poet, in a fit of rural enthusiasm, has exclaimed,

Hide me from *Day's* garish eye,

yet it would be alike dangerous and delusive to believe, that we cannot speculate at noon, as well as at night. In short, the choice of time or place is not essential, but the formation of habits of *self-sequestration*, and the acquisition of the precious power of withdrawing the mind from all external objects.

As, in Dr. Johnson's phrase, I am often *wakefully disturbed*, at midnight, and as I have not wholly forgotten my boyish attachment to woods and meadows, I acknowledge that I often commune with myself, in my chamber; and, in genial seasons, by the banks of a romantick river, or in the recesses of a lonely forest. I have already speculated twice on the profit and pleasure producible by nocturnal hours, wisely employed, and rural rambles, judiciously directed. But for a period of no inconsiderable duration, I have often retired to rest at a *vulgar* hour, and have wholly exchanged the country for the city. Change of circumstances demanded new habits. Though but seldom I *wind slowly o'er the lea;* though the glimmering *landscape* but rarely fades before my sight; and my ears generally listen to other sounds than the *drowsy tinklings* of a shepherd's bell, yet it is my duty to reflect much, even in the midst of confusion. Accordingly, I commune with my own heart, in the crowd, and can be still, even in the street. I sermonize in the

suburbs, and find apt alliteration in an alley. I start a topick in High-street, and hunt it down as far as Southwark, or the Northern Liberties. I walk through the market-place, as I once wandered in a wood; and while one is talking of his farm, and another of his merchandize, I listen to the suggestions of Fancy, or invoke the *Cherub Contemplation.*

But, to return to a more rigorous exposition of the text, and consider it merely as an exhortation to the tranquil exercise of our mental powers, in the retirement of the closet, I do not know whether in the pages of any philosopher, I could find a better lesson of salutary discipline. It is favourable to the culture of intellectual, as well as moral habits. He, who accustoms himself to closet meditations, will not only purify his heart, but correct his judgment, form his taste, exercise his memory, and regulate his imagination. Moreover, he then has an admirable opportunity to view the world, at a due distance, to form a deliberate estimate of life, to calculate, with precision, the proportion of his own powers, combined with those of other men, and, having weighed himself as it were in the *balance of the sanctuary*, to find new causes for regret, and new reasons for reformation.

To multitudes, Solitude, Retirement, and Reflection appear in a form more horrid than the *weird sisters* in Shakspeare. The man of business, the man of pleasure, the votary of Vanity, and the victim of Lassitude all sedulously shun those hours, which have been so nobly employed by Philosophers, Poets, Hermits, and Saints. Dr. YOUNG, who has immortalized his self-communion, in one of the most original poems in our language, a poem not only of gorgeous metaphors, but of the most ardent piety, exclaims, with more than mortal enthusiasm,

O, lost to Virtue, lost to manly thought,
Lost to THE NOBLEST SALLIES OF THE SOUL!
Who think it Solitude *to be alone*,
Communion sweet! communion large and high!
Our Reason, guardian Angel, and our God!

For The Port Folio.

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